

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LIFE
AND LEGACY OF SCOTT DAVIDSON

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 4, 2020

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, with feelings of sorrow, reverence, and immense gratitude, I rise today to honor the memory of Scott Davidson, who passed away last week after his battle with the coronavirus. As a proud member of the Kansas City Fire Department, Scott spent over a third of his life serving and protecting the people of Kansas City, Missouri.

Scott started his career with the Kansas City Fire Department in 2002 as a communication specialist with the Municipal Ambulance Services Trust, which provided emergency medical services to the Kansas City area. As a communication specialist, Scott served as the calming voice on the other side of the phone tasked with reassuring distressed families that help was on the way. Scott's calm demeanor and steady hand provided much needed hope in moments of darkness. Indeed, Scott helped ease worried minds, but more importantly, he played a vital role in saving countless lives throughout the city we call home. In 2010, Scott became a paramedic for the Department, joining a team that served as the first response to desperate cries for help. Each individual who, in a moment of crisis, called on Scott for help will forever remember and appreciate his heroic, lifesaving efforts as he sprang into action at a moment's notice. For Scott, as with countless paramedics across the country, saving lives and offering hope was the inspiration that prompted him to raise his hand and volunteer to risk his life for his community. In the days leading up to his untimely death, he was still on the frontlines, dispatching first responders to help those stricken by the same deadly virus that would eventually claim his own life.

More than anything, Scott was a man of faith who was a joy to all those who met him. Described by those who worked with him as having a personality and heart that was larger than life, Scott and his wife, Robin, treated the firefighters at Station 33 as if they were members of their own family. Together they celebrated the birth of every child in their fire station family, provided baked goods and treats to those working at the station during the holidays, and mourned with the families of other first responders who gave their lives in the line of duty.

Jackson County, Missouri has seen 175 neighbors, friends, and family members die from this virus. Scott, Captain Robert Rocha, and EMT Billy Birmingham are the first three of Kansas City's finest first responders who have succumbed to Coronavirus while helping save others. Scott dedicated over a third of his life to serving Kansas City and its people. My fervent hope is that Scott's death will serve as a reminder that we must stand together in the face of the adversity that plagues us. Wearing a protective mask, social distancing, and getting tested not only protects you from getting sick; it also ensures that first responders like Scott can go home to their families at the end of the day without worrying whether they or their loved ones will get sick. In times of unforeseen tragedy, I am comforted by the

teachings of Isaiah the prophet: When the righteous man perishes, he is taken away from calamity and enters into peace. A loving father, a dutiful public servant, and a beloved community member, Scott has rightfully earned the eternal peace that is awarded to the righteous man.

The thoughts of the Kansas City community and the Fifth Congressional District are with Robin and their three children, Scott's extended family, and the innumerable Kansas City Fire Department employees who were fortunate enough to work with him. Our community is mourning the untimely death of a young father, but we are also celebrating a life dedicated to serving and saving others. Madam Speaker, please join me in honoring Scott's legacy and offering our deepest condolences to his family. I also ask that you, other members of the House of Representatives, and the American people remember Scott and his family's sacrifice as we continue to combat the Coronavirus pandemic.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GUY RESCENTHALER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 4, 2020

Mr. RESCENTHALER. Madam Speaker, I was absent from the House on December 3, 2020. Had I been present, I would have voted nay on Roll Call No. 230, nay on Roll Call No. 231, and yea on Roll Call No. 232.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 4, 2020

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, due to a test indicating a positive result for a COVID-19 infection during the most recent district work period, I was unable to travel to the Capitol to vote on December 3, 2020. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 230; NAY on Roll Call No. 231; and NAY on Roll Call No. 232.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 4, 2020

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I unfortunately failed to register my vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended, H.R. 1380, the Big Cat Public Safety Act.

While casting a proxy vote for my colleague, I unintentionally overlooked casting my own vote purely by oversight. As a cosponsor of the bill and having just cast a proxy vote for the bill clearly I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 232.

CONGRATULATING AARON W.
SUTHERLAND

HON. JOE CUNNINGHAM

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 4, 2020

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the election of Aaron W. Sutherland to the Newport Board of Education in Newport, Kentucky.

Aaron is a proud son of Carrollton, Kentucky where he set out at an early age to serve his community. Aaron was active in student government at every level of his academic career and he has always been devoted to helping others. In fact, I met Aaron while we were both serving on the Student Bar Association of the Salmon P. Chase College of Law. Aaron believed that service to his colleagues required action to advance their causes. His inquisitive and civic-minded attitude is infectious, and those who know him know that he has their best interest at heart.

Aaron is a proud attorney, and devotes himself to helping his clients. In addition to practicing law, he is also a civil servant. His time dedicated to both the United States Department of Labor and the United States Social Security Administration demonstrates his passion for serving others.

Aaron also believes in public education. This year, Aaron set out to serve the children and teachers of Newport, Kentucky. He was elected on a platform of putting the students first, and that is exactly what he will do as a member of that body. Aaron believes that everyone deserves a high-quality education and he will work to make sure that all students have the opportunity to succeed.

The people of Newport are lucky to have Aaron serving on their Board of Education, and I am lucky to call him my friend.

RECOGNIZING SUPERVISOR JOHN
GRAY

HON. TOM McCLINTOCK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 4, 2020

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize John Gray for his devoted service as a Tuolumne County Supervisor.

Supervisor Gray was first elected to serve the 4th District of Tuolumne County in 2008 and has represented the people of this county and his district with passion, commitment and integrity ever since.

Supervisor Gray is well known for his many accomplishments and contributions to the community, including his leadership during an economic recession in 2008, acquiring grant funds to construct two Community Resilience Centers as well as two new Detention Facilities, and his consistent participation in fuels reduction and fire protection work. John has also been an instrumental leader for a special tax in support of Tuolumne County Ambulance in Groveland and implementing requirements of the Health Care and Public Safety realignments.

In his 12 years of service, John Gray will be remembered by the partnerships he built, his commitment to be a good steward of taxpayer

dollars and his constant focus on improving the lives of every resident of Tuolumne County.

Supervisor John Gray has truly been an asset to Tuolumne County in making it a more prosperous place for small businesses and a more desirable community for residents and visitors. It is my privilege to rise today in recognition of his distinguished public service.

RECOGNIZING MAJOR BRETT
KUHR

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 4, 2020

Mr. BERGMAN. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the tremendous work of Major Brett Kuhrt during his time as my office's legislative fellow. Major Kuhrt's leadership, work ethic, and commitment to public service have made him an integral part of our team.

In a year of unprecedented challenges, Brett has helped countless constituents in Michigan's First District with everything from navigating federal agencies to answering in-depth policy questions. He has shown a keen ability to tackle complex issues ranging from national security and defense to veterans and labor policy, crafting legislative policy and providing technical support to staff. Brett has also displayed a true willingness to serve in multiple capacities, always lending a hand when needed, no questions asked. He has set a high standard for future fellows and is an outstanding example of the best of the U.S. Air Force.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of myself and my staff, I thank Major Kuhrt for his exceptional work on behalf of Michigan's First Congressional District, and I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LIFE
AND MEMORY OF CAPTAIN ROBERT
"BOBBY" ROCHA

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 4, 2020

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy and tired heart to honor the life of fire Captain Robert Joseph "Bobby" Rocha. Captain Rocha was a beloved, giving, vibrant soul, who lost his life last week after battling a COVID-19 infection he caught in the line of duty. Captain Rocha gave twenty-nine years of honorable service to the Kansas City Fire Department, and while his life was cut short, we must ensure that his memory is never forgotten.

Captain Rocha began at the fire department back in 1991, the same year I was sworn in as Mayor of Kansas City. Since then, I have watched from afar as he rose to the rank of Captain while earning the respect and admiration of his fellow firefighters and the city he protected. When the coronavirus hit, Captain Rocha knew the fire department was in for a long haul. During this past year, firefighters around the country have been assisting EMTs

more and more with pandemic-related emergency calls. In Kansas City, more than 200 members of the fire department have tested positive and seventy-three are currently infected. Captain Rocha likely came into contact with ten to fifteen COVID-19 each and every day while in uniform.

And then, the worst happened. In early November, Captain Rocha went into quarantine and was eventually hospitalized. He fought the disease valiantly, with the same vigor and verve with which he fought fires and saved lives for nearly three decades. But as Captain Rocha no doubt taught the young firefighters he trained, not all battles can be won; and on November 21st, Captain Rocha made his way toward eternal peace. He was sixty years old.

Captain Rocha will be remembered in the community as a courageous public servant and a generous leader. We will never forget his selflessness, his humility, or the twenty-nine years he dedicated to our safety and peace of mind. His team will remember him as a mentor who trained and prepared them for the risks that they faced every day on the job. His family and friends remember him as loving man with a good sense of humor and an incredible ability to inspire those around him. They remember Captain Rocha as a man who would do anything for anybody. They say people looked up to him "like he was Hercules." And throughout his life, Captain Rocha always proved to be a decent, dependable man—a man who loved to ride his motorcycle, sing karaoke, and spend time with friends at the Outpost Bar and Grill.

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many," scripture tells us. This has been a year of loss, a year of painful goodbyes, and a year of empty seats at the dinner table. But it also a year of heroes. The doctors, nurses, medical students, nursing students, EMTs, firefighters, and ordinary Americans who have placed their health in the hands of God to save others. Heroes who have come to serve the wellbeing of complete strangers. And, all too often, heroes who have given their lives as ransom for untold millions. Heroes like Captain Rocha.

Today, my prayers are with Captain's Rocha's family, his friends, and all his brothers and sisters at Station 18. Let it be preserved in this timeless Record that his loss leaves us with a grief that cannot be weighed and debt that cannot be paid. His legacy lives on in the countless lives he touched and saved. So, Madam Speaker, let us honor Captain Rocha. Let us remember the light he brought with him everywhere he went. And, whatever we do in Congress today, tomorrow, next week, next year let the story of Captain Rocha sit at my chair in this Chamber. Let the stories of his fallen brothers, Billy Birmingham and Scott Davidson, walk with me through these halls. Let those stories remind us all that we have a part to play. Let them remind us of our duty to serve.

In the coming days, flags across my state will fly at half-staff to honor Captain Rocha, dutiful Americans will wear masks and adhere to social distancing, and first responders will wake up again and again to walk into a weary nightmare that we have the power to make less dark. Captain Rocha gave his life to save others. We can never repay that debt. But it is our duty to try.

MARTHA GRACE FIELDS, CONGRESSIONAL AWARD SILVER MEDALIST

HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 4, 2020

Mr. McCAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding work of Martha Grace Fields. Martha is an exceptional young woman who was recently announced as a Silver Medalist for the Congressional Award, one of the highest honors presented to America's youth. The Congressional Award Foundation was created to recognize initiative, service, and achievement in young people. Martha has demonstrated the core components of this award through her servant heart and unmatched work ethic. She gave back to her local community by completing over two-hundred hours of public service. Beyond her service to others, she put in hundreds of hours of personal development by competing on her high school swim team and enrolling in numerous leadership courses and seminars. Additionally, Martha was one of the first females to receive the highest honor in Boy Scouts, the rank of Eagle Scout. Simultaneously, she received the highest rank in the Sea Scouts, Quartermaster. Martha's continued hard work has not gone unnoticed, and I am proud to see her receive the recognition she deserves. I would like to congratulate Martha for her impressive achievements at such a young age and I look forward to seeing her continued success and leadership.

HONORING PRESIDENT JERRY
RAWLINGS OF GHANA

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 4, 2020

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, today we honor the extraordinary life and career of Jerry Rawlings, the former President of Ghana.

He was born on June 22, 1947 in Accra, Ghana to his loving mother Victoria Agbotuni. He received his education from the Achimota Secondary School, graduating in 1966 with his general education certification. While in school he became well known for his love of Polo and his willingness to speak out about injustice.

In 1967 he enlisted in the Ghanaian Air Force and became a flight cadet. Shortly afterward, he was selected to attend the Ghana Military Academy and Training School. Upon completing his training in 1969 he was awarded the "Speed Bird Trophy" acknowledging his top ranking status in flying and airmanship. Nine years later he earned the rank Flight-Lieutenant.

During his career in the military, he began to observe how corruption, privilege, and injustice impact soldiers and the people they are sworn to protect.

His concerns about Ghana's future led him to become an outspoken critic of the corruption and mismanagement he saw from the country's military leaders and called for more attention to the plight of Ghana's poor.